12.a.16.9.

A FUNERAL

SERMON

Occasioned by the

DEATH

OF

Dame Mary Page,

Relict of

Sir GREGORY PAGE, *Bar.*

Preached at

Devonshire-Square, March 16, 1728.

To which is added,

A Short FUNERAL ORATION, pronounced at the Time of her Interment:

AND AN

ODE Sacred to Her Memory.

By THOMAS HARRISON.

LONDON,

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

TO

Mr. and *Mrs.* WAY.

Sir, *and* Madam,

THE following Sermon, *you are ſenſible, I compoſed at your Requeſt; a Requeſt, which was contrary to my Expectation, but founded on Reaſons, which, both to you and to me, appear to be capable of the fulleſt Vindication: And a very ſmall Time was allotted me for finiſhing the Diſcourſe. Yet you have been pleaſed to expreſs your ſelves entirely ſatisfy'd with it. Since, therefore the Publication of it was neceſſary, to fulfil the Will of the Deceaſed; I could not but deſire to ſend it abroad under your Patronage: That you have allowed me to do it, I ſhall always gratefully*

 acknow-

acknowledge to be an additional Favour to the many unmerited ones, which in the Courſe of ſeveral Years, you have conferred on me.

You have alſo permitted me to acquaint the World, that the Oration, and the Ode, were publiſhed, becauſe you aſſured me, this would further promote your good Deſign of perpetuating, in a proper Manner, the Memory of ſo worthy a Relative.

That you may long enjoy together the Bleſſings of an indulgent Providence, that you may be eminently Uſeful, and extenſively Happy, and that at laſt, you may receive a diſtinguiſhing Crown, will ever be the Prayer of,

Sir, *and* Madam,

Your moſt Obedient,

Grays-Inn-Lane,
Mar. 18, 1728.

Humble Servant,

Tho. Harriſon.

2 TIM. IV. 7, 8.

I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give me at that Day: And not to me only, but unto all them alſo, that love his Appearing.

YOU are all apprized of the mournful Occaſion of my preſent Office: Death has made a melancholy Breach in this Society; has removed one, who by her exemplary Behaviour endeared her ſelf to all that were acquainted with her Character. Yet we are not to *ſorrow even as others who have no Hope*; but to rejoice, that the Experience of the deceas'd Lady correſponded with thoſe Words, which

I have read, that ſhe could ſay, when Death came to grant her the long deſired Releaſe, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith*, &c.

When Saint *Paul* wrote this Epiſtle, he expected ſoon to lay down his Life in the Defence of the Goſpel: For he ſays, in the Verſe preceding the Text, *I am now ready to be offered, and the Time of my Departure is at hand.* And he, who had long appeared in the Chriſtian Cauſe, with an undaunted Courage, was willing, in the moſt publick Manner to declare, That he retained the ſame Sentiments which he embraced when he firſt became a Diſciple of Jeſus. Now he ſaw himſelf on the Confines of Eternity; and it might be reaſonably ſuppoſed, that he viewed the State of his own Affairs with the utmoſt Impartiality. Yet he was ſo far from repenting of his ſteady Adherence to the Redeemer, that the Reflection on it was the Source of unſpeakable Delight: Peace and Joy reigned in his pious Soul; and for the Honour of Religion, and the Encouragement of its ſincere Profeſſors, he would have others to be Witneſſes of it. Therefore he ſays, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſh-*

ed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give me at that Day: And not to me only, but unto all them alſo, that love his Appearing.

In theſe Words we may obſerve three Things.

I. The Teſtimony which St. *Paul* had in his own Mind, in Favour of his paſt Conduct.

II. The delightful Proſpect which was ſet before him, when he looked forward.

III. The Encouragement which he gave others to follow his Example, by aſſuring them, that if they did ſo, they ſhould ſhare with him in the Glories of Eternity.

I. We may obſerve the Teſtimony which the Apoſtle had in his own Mind, in Favour of his paſt Conduct.

'Tis contained in theſe three Propoſitions: *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith.*

The

The Apoſtle *Paul* had a fine Imagination, as well as a ſolid Judgment; and therefore he frequently made uſe of well choſen Metaphors, taken from the Objects of Senſe, to deſcribe thoſe which are infinitely more noble. We have a remarkable Inſtance in theſe Words: For he compares his Circumſtances to a Warfare, and to a Race, evidently alluding to thoſe Exerciſes that were in Uſe among the *Grecians*; for which Reaſon, they perfectly underſtood both the Force of the Terms, and the Propriety of the Figures. And he conſiders himſelf alſo in the Character of a Steward, when he ſpeaks of keeping the Faith.

1. He ſays, *I have fought a good Fight.* This ſeems to refer in a peculiar Manner to his public Character: And it denotes his faithful, conſtant Adherence to Chriſt, and Endeavour to ſupport his Intereſt, amidſt all the Oppoſition which he met with, from the united Powers of Earth and Hell. He tells the Chriſtians, in his Farewel to them at *Miletus*, * *The Holy Ghoſt witneſſeth in every City; ſaying, That Bonds and Afflictions abide me*, or wait for me; *But none of theſe Things*

* Acts xx. 23, 24.

move

move me, neither count I my Life dear unto my ſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtify the Goſpel of the Grace of God.

Now he had Reaſon to call this a good Fight: For he had the beſt of Cauſes; his great Aim was to be the Deſtruction of Satan's Empire over unhappy Men; that they might be reſtored to their Maker's Image, and triumph in his Love; that they might behave in a Manner agreeable to the Dignity of their Nature, as reaſonable Creatures, and no longer take up with thoſe mean Satisfactions which they had in common with the Brutes.

It was a good Fight alſo, becauſe he had acted againſt the Enemies of the Redeemer, with an unſhaken Reſolution, and with equal Succeſs: Poverty and Reproaches, Bonds and Impriſonments, the Proſpect of Death it ſelf, and the Horrors of the Grave, could not incline him to lay down his Weapons, till the great Captain of his Salvation ſhould give him a Diſcharge. And with regard to his Succeſs, he ſays, * *In nothing I ſhall*

* Phil. i. 20.

be aſhamed; but with all Boldneſs, as always, now alſo Chriſt ſhall be magnified in my Body, whether it be by Life or by Death. The Apoſtle adds,

2. *I have finiſhed my Courſe.*

In this metaphorical Deſcription of his Life, he ſeems more eſpecially to refer to his Character as a Chriſtian. The Life of a virtuous Man is frequently compared to the running a Race. * *So run*, ſays St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, *that ye may obtain.* And he gives this Account of himſelf in the latter End of the ſame Chapter; *I therefore ſo run, not as uncertainly—— But I keep under my Body, and bring it into Subjection, leſt that by any Means, when I have preached to others, I my ſelf ſhould be a caſt-away.*

While Men forſake the Fear of the Almighty, they run in that which our Saviour calls the Broad Way, the Way that leadeth to Deſtruction †. But the ſincerely good have changed their Courſe; they are haſtening from thoſe Realms of Darkneſs into which they were once ſinking; awakened out of their pleaſing Dream, they tremble at the Apprehenſion of having a Place aſſigned them, amidſt

* 1 Cor. ix. 24. † Matt. vii. 13.

the

the devouring Flames and everlaſting Burnings. Nor can they be ſatisfied with any thing ſhort of an Arrival at the World of perfect Purity and conſummate Joy: Heaven is the bleſſed Country towards which they bend their Courſe: And the Way to this is the Way of Holineſs: For our Lord ſays, * *Bleſſed are the pure in Heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* And the Advice given to the *Hebrews* is, † *Follow Holineſs, without which no Man ſhall ſee the Lord.* In this Way, they who run the Chriſtian Race are making a conſtant Progreſs: By proper Methods, they are ſeeking a greater Reſemblance of the Divine Being in his moral Perfections. And with the concluding Scene of Life, they finiſh their Courſe: At Death they may ſay, I have run my Race, I am come to the Goal, I am ready for the Prize.

3. St. *Paul* adds, *I have kept the Faith.*

By the Faith 'tis natural to underſtand in this Place the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which is called by St. *Jude*, *The Faith once delivered to the Saints* ||. And by his keeping it, is denoted his making no Alteration in any Part of the Doctrine which he had received of the Lord, either as to

* Matt. v. 8. † Heb. xii. 14. || Jude iii.

his own Sentiments, or his Declaration of them.

He ſeems particularly to refer to the Care which he had taken for the Preſervation of the Goſpel of Chriſt in the Purity of it; that thoſe judaizing Chriſtians might gain no Ground, who were for mixing the Inſtitution of *Moſes* with that much more perfect one of our bleſſed Saviour.

And it will be readily allowed, that 'tis the indiſpenſable Duty of all thoſe who embrace the Religion of *Jeſus*, to perſevere in the Belief of his Doctrines, as well as to practiſe his Rules: Nor ſhould we be unwilling, on all proper Occaſions, to declare our Belief; becauſe Chriſt has ſaid, * *Whoſoever ſhall confeſs me before Men, him will I alſo confeſs before my Father, which is in Heaven; but whoſoever will deny me before Men, him will I alſo deny before my Father.* If we in a ſuitable Way acknowledge him, inſtead of denying us, he will own us in a Manner infinitely to our Advantage, in the great Day of Judgment, which leads me to the ſecond Head of Diſcourſe.

II. The delightful Proſpect which St. *Paul* had when he looked forward.

* Matt. x. 32, 33.

Hence-

Henceforth, ſays he, *there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give me in that Day.*

He had indeed a preſent Reward: For he could ſay, * *Our rejoicing is this, the Teſtimony of our Conſcience, that in Simplicity, and godly Sincerity, not with fleſhly Wiſdom; but by the Grace of God we have had our Converſation in the World.* But he expected an inconceivably greater. And tho' his Thoughts were on this Occaſion led to the laſt ſolemn Day of Account; yet we are aſſured, that he did not expect to wait till ſo diſtant a Seaſon, for the Subſtance of his Felicity: No, he knew, that when he was abſent from the Body, he ſhould be preſent with the Lord; that when he departed hence he ſhould aſcend to his bleſſed Redeemer; and that, his ſeparate Soul being numbered amongſt the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, he ſhould be both employed and entertained in a moſt agreeable Manner, while his Body muſt be confined in the gloomy Chambers of the Grave.

But he now conſidered the Reward as complete; and he knew that it would

* 2 Cor. i. 12.

not

not be ſo, till Chriſt ſhould come in the Character of Supreme Judge: He ſpeaks therefore of the Time when he ſhould appear, *That Day*, the Day wherein the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth, and all its Works ſhall be burnt up; the Day wherein the Tribunal ſhall be erected, and the Judge ſhall come, attended by Myriads of glorious Angels, and ſhall ſummon all the Nations before his awful Seat.

In that Day St. *Paul* expected to receive *a Crown*: Here he alludes to the Cuſtom of Crowning thoſe who were Conquerors in the *Grecian* Strifes. And by the Metaphor, he would convey to us an Idea of the higheſt Honour, and the moſt ſublime Pleaſures: How great an Honour ſhall we account it, to be pronounced Conquerors by the Redeemer! Conquerors over Sin, Hell, and Death! to be welcomed to an eternal Abode in his glorious Preſence! How raviſhing will our Delight be, when we ſhall receive theſe moſt public Tokens of his Approbation, whom all the Hoſts of Heaven worſhip, whom the Cherubim, and the Seraphim adore! And it is one excellent Property of this Crown, that its Luſtre ſhall never decay: When the Wicked

Wicked depart *into everlaſting Puniſhment*, the Righteous ſhall enter *into Life Eternal* *.

This Life Eternal, the Apoſtle ſtiles *a Crown of Righteouſneſs:* He might poſſibly refer to the chief Source of that Fulneſs of Joy which the Saints ſhall poſſeſs in the Kingdom of Heaven, *viz.* Their perfect Righteouſneſs, their exact Reſemblance of God. But he ſeems, at leaſt, principally to have in View the Diſplay which ſhould be made of the Redeemer's Faithfulneſs, in beſtowing this Crown: For he immediately adds, *which the Lord, the righteous Judge ſhall give me.* The Goſpel promiſes a Crown of Life to thoſe who fight the good Fight, who finiſh their Courſe, and keep the Faith: And Chriſt will ſhew, that he is a righteous Judge, in beſtowing this Crown on all to whom 'tis promiſed.

The Perſon from whom the Apoſtle looked for his Crown is alſo ſtyled, *The Lord.* This is the Title by which he was frequently made known, after his Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion to Glory, with a View to that Dominion, with which he is inveſted, as the Reward of

* Mat. xxv. 46.

his

his Sufferings: *He humbled himſelf and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Croſs. Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name, that at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhould bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth; and that every Tongue ſhould confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father* *.

This Lord was to *give* him the Crown: The future Happineſs of good Men, even eternal Life, is ſaid to be *the Gift of God, through Jeſus Chriſt.* The Reaſon of this is, that (to uſe the Expreſſions of this ſame Writer) *The Reward is not of Debt, but of Grace* †. Our Saviour ſhed his Blood to make our Peace with God, to procure the Pardon of our Sins, and the Acceptance of our imperfect Services. I proceed,

III. To conſider the Encouragement which the Apoſtle gave others to follow his Example, by aſſuring them, that if they did ſo, they ſhould be Sharers with him in the Glories of Eternity. *And not*

* Phil. ii. 8, 9, 10, 11. † *See* Rom. iv. 4.

to

to me only, but unto all them alſo that love his Appearing, he will give a Crown of Righteouſneſs.

Though the Apoſtle had deſcribed his own Conduct, which had ſomething peculiar to his publick Station, though he had been viewing a Crown, the Luſtre of which was to bear a Proportion to his Attainments and Labours: Yet he intimated, that in ſome Things there was an Agreement between his Caſe, and that of Chriſtians in general, both as to Service and Reward. There is a lower Senſe in which each ſincerely pious Man may ſay, at the cloſe of his Life, I have *fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith:* For through divine Aids, he has waged War ſucceſsfully againſt the Fleſh, the World, and the Devil; he has preſſed towards the Mark, and according to his Station, contributed to the Preſervation of the Chriſtian Faith.

Now theſe happy Perſons, who behave in ſuch a Manner, are deſcribed by their Love of Chriſt's Appearing. Many, alas! are chained down to the Objects of Senſe: They baniſh all ſerious Thoughts of the Judge's coming in Power and great Glory: Their higheſt Am-

bition is to indulge their particular Appetites, and Humours. Could they live here always in Pomp and Splendor, be array'd with coſtly Apparel, and fare ſumptuouſly every Day; they would conſent that the Followers of the Redeemer ſhould go without them, to receive the unfading Crown. But the good Man's Temper is the Reverſe: He looks with Contempt on this World, in the midſt of all his Enjoyments, and uſes it, as one who dreads nothing more than the Abuſe of it. His Heart is fixed on heavenly Objects; and with ardent Deſires he looks to that joyful Day, wherein he ſhall be one of the Saviour's ſplendid Train: O! ſays he, may I have Reaſon to triumph, when *the Heavens* ſhall depart *as a Scrowl, that is rolled together; and every Mountain and Iſland ſhall be removed out of their Places*; when *the Kings of the Earth, and the great Men, and the rich Men, and the chief Captains*, or Captains of Thouſands, *and the mighty Men, and every Bond-man, and every Free-man*, ſhall *hide themſelves in the Dens, and in the Rocks of the Mountains*; *and* ſhall ſay *to the Mountains, and to the Rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him that ſit-*

ſitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb: For the great Day of his Wrath is come; and who ſhall be able to ſtand *? May I, ſays the devout Perſon, who loves Chriſt's Appearing, may I have the Judge for my Friend, who is to paſs the irreverſible Sentence upon me! How does the Expectation of it raviſh my Soul! How does it invigorate my Love to that kind Redeemer, who has aſſured me, That the Meaneſt of his Servants ſhall not be diſowned by him!

One Thing more we are to remark, *viz.* That our Lord will not barely own, but he will crown every one of thoſe who come under this Character. He will grant them the Felicity for which he pleaded with his Father, when he ſaid, *Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory* †. There will be one bright Aſſembly of Angels and Saints for ever to poſſeſs the heavenly Kingdom.

It remains now that I conclude with a few practical Inferences.

* Rev. vi. 14, 15, 16, 17. † John xvii. 24.

1. I infer from the Words of St. *Paul*, in the Text, the immenſe Goodneſs of God, who has provided a Crown of Life for all his Son's obedient Subjects.

Were we to reap no more than the genuine Fruits of Piety during this mortal State, we could have no Reaſon to impeach the divine Goodneſs: Had the great Author of our Being determined, that our Service, and our Felicity ſhould end with this Life, and that we ſhould be capable of neither Happineſs nor Miſery after it, we muſt have own'd, that, conſidering our Revolt from him, he had dealt kindly with us.

Should it not then raiſe our Wonder to the higheſt Pitch, that he will recompenſe us for theſe ſhort Services, which are very imperfect, with an incorruptible Crown? that he will ſend his only begotten Son from his Throne in Heaven, to meet us, and conduct us to everlaſting Manſions? Well might St. *John* ſay, *God is Love* *.

2. Are there Crowns of Righteouſneſs to be diſtributed amongſt the ſincere Followers of the Lamb of God, when he ſhall come again? Then ſurely we ought

* 1 John iv. 8.

to

to be ſolicitous that we may have a juſt Claim to the Character.

Let me therefore recommend this to you with the greateſt Earneſtneſs, that you would now ſecure the Favour of your Judge: If you think ſeriouſly on the Subject, you will confeſs, that it deſerves your beſt Regards, what ever the Language of your Practice hath been.

If you can find no Leiſure for it now; you may expect, that 'twill be preſented to your View, and ſit heavy on your Minds, when the pale Meſſengers of Death ſhall lay hold on you, when you ſhall find every earthly Comfort forſaking you. And O! whither will you then flee for Succour? How will you be able to endure in the Hour of Trial? Nothing will ſupport you at that Time, unleſs you can look up to the exalted Saviour, with an holy Courage, and reſign your departing Souls into his merciful Hands; having a comfortable Perſwaſion, that he will guard and provide for them, till he ſhall raiſe your Bodies, and array them for the joyful Coronation.

Will any ſay that the Affair muſt indeed be attended to, but 'twill be ſoon enough hereafter to engage in it? Vain Man! thou haſt not weighed the Uncertainty

certainty of Life; thou haſt forgot the Caution of the royal Preacher; *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to Morrow; for thou knoweſt not what a Day may bring forth* *. A few Hours may fix thy State for Eternity: And if theſe be all ſpent in Sin and Folly; how dreadful will thy Portion be! Follow therefore, I beſeech you, by the Mercies of God, the Advice of his dear Son, who is to be your Judge. Hearken to his affectionate Call; *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Reſt. Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in Heart, and ye ſhall find Reſt to your Souls. For my Yoke is eaſy, and my Burden is light* †.

3. The Example of St. *Paul* teacheth us, after we have choſen well, to abide by our Choice; that we may reflect with Satisfaction, on our paſt Behaviour, when we are leaving the World.

If we have ſet out in the right Path, let us be ſolicitous to proceed: How ardently ſhould we deſire, that every Stain of our Minds may be waſhed away! that we may more nearly reſemble our God, our Redeemer, the holy Angels, and the perfected Spirits of pious Men.

* Prov. xxvii. 1. † Mat. xi. 28, 29, 30.

And

And becauſe we need the Aſſiſtance of God, let us daily ſeek his Help with all Humility and Fervour, encouraged by the Words of our bleſſed Saviour; * *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good Gifts to your Children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

4. The Proſpect of a Crown of Righteouſneſs ſhould excite in us an unfeigned Contempt of this preſent World.

All its gay, alluring Vanities ſhould appear as nothing to us: We ſhould not ſo regard them, as to be unmindful of that heavenly Country, which ſhall remain when the Faſhion of this World is paſſed away. And if Afflictions preſs us, we ſhould not faint, nor murmur; *While we look not at the Things which are ſeen, and are temporal, but at the Things which are not ſeen, and which are eternal* †.

5. The Apoſtle teacheth us, by his own Example, often to reflect on our paſt Behaviour, and to look forward to the promiſed Crown.

Nor will it be a little uſeful: For 'twill encourage us to advance further, to obſerve how we have been aſſiſted and ſuc-

* Luke xi. 13. † 2 Cor. iv. 18.

ceeded

ceeded in our Purſuits of true Goodneſs, and to view thoſe everlaſting Tokens of the divine Favour, which we, in due Seaſon, ſhall receive. This was confirmed by the Experience of our moſt valuable, deceaſed Friend, of whom I ſhall give you the following Account.

She was the Relict of the late Sir *Gregory Page*, Bart. who was himſelf many Years an honourable Member of this Church, and whoſe Death was moſt juſtly lamented by the whole Body of *Proteſtant Diſſenters*: For they were ſenſible of his Readineſs zealouſly to eſpouſe, and ſupport their common Intereſt, and Liberty of ſerving God, according to the Dictates of their Conſciences.

It was her Happineſs to have the Benefit of a religious Education; and that, in her early Time of Life, her Heart was inclined to ſeek the God of her Fathers; wherein ſhe conformed to our bleſſed Saviour's Rule, *John* v. 39. *Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal Life; and they are they which teſtify of me*; together with the Apoſtle *Paul*'s Advice to the *Theſſalonians*, Ep. 1. Ch. v. Ver. 21. *Prove all Things; hold faſt that which is good.*

Here-

Hereupon ſhe betook her ſelf to a diligent reading of theſe ſacred Records, with which ſhe carefully compared a Variety of Books relating to Controverſial Points, in order to form her own Judgment, Faith, and Practice. In the Courſe of theſe Enquiries, ſhe was at particular Seaſons perplexed with Doubts and Fears, and continued for ſome Time under the Power of them: But theſe were at length diſpell'd by the reading ſundry Paſſages of Scripture, for the directing her Eye to which, ſhe own'd the Goodneſs of God to her dying Day, *viz. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not diſmay'd, for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee, I will help thee; Yea, I will uphold thee with the Right-hand of my Righteouſneſs*, Iſa. xli. 10. Alſo *Ver.* 13. *I the Lord thy God will hold thy Right-hand, ſaying unto thee, Fear not, I will help thee. The Word of God is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart; that is the Word of Faith which we preach, That if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy Mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine Heart, that God hath raiſed him from the Dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved*, Rom. x. 8, 9. *This is Life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and*

Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent, John xvii. 3. And as to her Judgment in relation to Baptiſm, ſhe grounded it on theſe Paſſages amongſt others, *He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved*, Mark xvi. 16. *But when they believed Philip, preaching the Things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, they were baptized both Men and Women*, Acts viii. 12.

At the Expiration of five Years, employ'd in theſe Meditations, ſhe was convinced of its being her Duty to put on the Lord Jeſus by Baptiſm: And accordingly ſhe was baptized in the Preſence of above 200 People; and ſhe was added to this Church, then under the Care of the Reverend Mr. *Maiſters*. How great an Ornament ſhe was to her holy Profeſſion, how careful to adorn the Doctrine of God her Saviour in all Things, there are many Witneſſes in this Aſſembly.

For ſeveral of the latter Years of her Life, it pleas'd God to afflict her with a tedious Chronical Illneſs, which depriv'd her of attending on publick Ordinances *.

* This was a Dropſy, for which ſhe was tapped the firſt Time, *Dec.* 24. 1723. and in all 66 Times: The Quantity of Water drawn from her was, according to a regular Account which ſhe kept, 240 Gallons.

During

During this Period, ſhe thought it her Duty; and that ſhe was called on by a very particular Occurrence to examine anew *, Whether the Belief in which ſhe had been educated, and the Way of Worſhip, which for ſo many Years ſhe had judg'd a ſure Foundation to build on, was the right Way to Heaven? Or whether ſhe was miſtaken, and in an Error? And if ſo, Whether, or not, ſome more ſafe, and more ſatisfactory Way might not be found out, to direct her in her Progreſs to Heaven?

The Reſult of theſe Enquiries was, that ſhe was of too Catholic a Spirit to blame, or even think the worſe of thoſe who preferred the Communion of the eſtabliſh'd Church: Yet, for her own Part, ſhe declar'd, ſhe had no Doubts from any of the Motives ſuggeſted to her Conſideration, to induce her to think that ſhe was under Neceſſity of making a better Choice; but had abundant Reaſon to bleſs God, whoſe Grace enabled her to perſevere, ſtedfaſt, and immoveable.

Theſe Sentiments ſhe directed to be declar'd in a Funeral Diſcourſe on the Words of the Text, choſen by her for that Purpoſe; together with the Mention of the ſundry,

* *Vid.* Dr. Warren's Impartial Ch. Preface.

already recited Paſſages of Scripture. And a few Days before ſhe left the World, even when Nature was ſunk to a very low Ebb, ſhe again repeated them, and referr'd likewiſe to theſe following, *viz. Watch, and ſtand faſt in the Faith; quit ye like Men, be ſtrong*, 1 Cor. xvi. 13. *Fight the good Fight of Faith, lay hold on eternal Life, whereunto thou art alſo called, and haſt profeſſed a good Profeſſion before many Witneſſes*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. *Let us hold faſt the Profeſſion of our Faith without wavering*, Heb. x. 23. *Be ready always to give an Anſwer to every Man that asketh you a Reaſon of the Hope that is in you, with Meckneſs and Fear, having a good Conſcience*, 1 Pet. iii. 15, 16. former part. *The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my Name, he ſhall teach you all Things, and bring all Things to your Remembrance*, John xiv. 26. All theſe Scriptures ſhe had carefully marked in her Bible; and with a peculiar Fervour ſhe repeated her dying Requeſt, to have them mentioned in this Manner to the World, as the Support of her Faith, the Anchor of her Hope, and the great Source of her Conſolation.

God

God had bleſſed her with many Endowments of Body and Mind, as well as render'd her eminent in the Exerciſe of many Chriſtian Graces: She had a very amiable Perſonage, with an uncommon Livelineſs and Vivacity. She was an affectionate Friend, and very ready to do good Offices. Her conſtant Regards to this Church, her tender Concern for Paſtor and People, and her uncommon Benefaction upon their Removal hither, deſerve a particular Acknowledgment; as does alſo her further Bounty given in her laſt Will for the Relief of their poor Members. The Principle which inclined her to this, had been a powerful one, during the Time of her Life: Vaſt Sums of Money ſhe diſtributed in ſo ſilent a Way, that, to uſe our Saviour's Words, *her Left-hand knew not what her Right-hand did.* Nor could it now have been known to us, if ſhe had not left behind her the exact Account of her Affairs. And it appears from this Account, that her Charity was truly Chriſtian, and not confin'd to a Party; and that ſhe aim'd at more than the preſerving a miſerable Life, even the making thoſe comfortable in their Circumſtances, who, without her Aſſiſtance, muſt have felt the greateſt Hardſhips. And

ſurely

ſurely 'tis a more noble Act of Charity to put the Poor into a Capacity of living without the Aſſiſtance of others, than by a conſtant Allowance, merely to keep them from ſtarving. She was a great Inſtance of Patience, under long and continued Weakneſſes of Body: And ſhe own'd with Gratitude to the divine Being, his Goodneſs to her, in the Plenty and Affluence he had bleſſed her with, which procured her all human Means and Aſſiſtances: She was very thankful that he ſupported her Spirits, and preſerv'd her Intellects clear, ſaying, She had taſted God was gracious; that in the midſt of Judgment he had remembred Mercy. And ſhe reconciled her ſelf to all the Pains and Infirmities ſhe ſuſtain'd, often repeating the Words of *Job*, *ſhall we receive Good at the Hands of the Lord, and ſhall we not receive Evil?*

A few Days before her Diſſolution, when ſhe was asked whether ſhe had a comfortable Proſpect of a better World; ſhe reply'd, "I have, I have, I have." And to ſome of her near Relatives, ſhe at another time expreſs'd her ſelf thus; "Now I am going into Eternity, I am "able to review my paſt Conduct with "Comfort, and think what I have done "is right." In

In this Compoſedneſs and Tranquility of Mind, our dear, departed Friend, without the leaſt Groan, or Struggle of Nature, fell aſleep in Jeſus; and ſhe exchanged this Vale of Tears, for thoſe happy Manſions, where the Weary are at Reſt, and where there is nothing, but perfect Harmony, Peace and Love.

What Support muſt theſe Things yield to affectionate Relatives under their Loſs! How ſhould they and we be excited to copy after ſo excellent a Pattern! Then may we all rejoice in the various Changes of Life, and at the Hour of Death: Then may we triumph as this worthy Saint did, in the Language of the Apoſtle; *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith*, &c.

THE

ORATION*.

HOW Awful are the Solemnities of a Funeral? To be encompaſſed with Graves, to have the Remains of a deceaſed Friend placed in our View, ready to be ſhut up in a ſilent Tomb, muſt ſurely diſpoſe us for ſerious Reflection: While the ſad Enſigns of Death, the mighty Conqueror, are diſplay'd around us, how naturally are we led to number our Days? to think on our latter End? to conſider, that when the few remaining Sands of our Glaſs are run out, our Seaſon of Probation will be ended, our State for Eternity determined? Such melancholly Inſtances as

* *N. B.* The Service frequently performed amongſt the Diſſenters, at the Burial of the Dead, conſiſts of an Oration, and a Prayer, concluded with the Lord's-Prayer, and the Benediction,

this,

this, teach us to ſay, *Man who is born of a Woman, is of few Days, and full of Trouble; he cometh forth like a Flower, and is cut down; he fleeth as a Shadow, and continueth not.* We ſee that nothing can defend us againſt the Attacks of the King of Terrors: A very graceful Perſonage, a plentiful Fortune, the largeſt Endowments of the Mind, a great Stock of uſeful Knowledge, and an equal Share of undiſſembled Piety and Devotion, a generous Contempt of this World in the midſt of its Splendor, even all theſe could not exempt from the common Lot of Mankind, our worthy Friend; whoſe Body we commit to the Duſt, in ſure and certain Hope of the Reſurrection unto eternal Life, whoſe perfected Spirit enjoys the moſt exquiſite Happineſs in the divine Preſence. And how ſoon the very ſame Office may be performed for us by others, we cannot ſay: This we know, that our Life is even a Vapour; it may vaniſh e'er we are aware of its Departure.

Inſtead therefore of indulging immoderate Grief, we ſhould remember, it is of the laſt Importance to us, that we *apply our Hearts to Wiſdom*: We are entruſted with many Talents; 'twill be our own

Fault if we improve them not; and ſhould we at laſt have the Character of unprofitable Servants, we ſhall for ever upbraid our ſelves for our wretched Stupidity. Wherefore, ſince the Son of God once quitted his glorious Throne, viſited this lower World, and died on a Croſs, that he might deſtroy Death, and him who had the Power of it, ſince they alone, who take his eaſy Yoke upon them, ſhall reap the Benefit of this great Exploit; to be truly wiſe is, to own him for our Saviour and King.

Let us then rely on his Sacrifice, as the Atonement for our Sins: Let us make his Honour our Aim, his Word our Law, his Life our Pattern. Let us imitate him, by following thoſe who have run well to the End: Let not the fair Example of the Deceaſed be forgotten; but by the frequent Views of it, let us be animated in our Courſe, and encouraged to perſevere.

So ſhall we find that the Ways of heavenly Wiſdom are *Ways of Pleaſantneſs, and her Paths, Paths of Peace:* We ſhall be prepar'd for all Events, in Life, have the true Reliſh of Proſperity, and needful Supports in Adverſity. Nor ſhall we have any Reaſon to be diſ-

diſmay'd in the Hour of Death: For when the earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle is diſſolved, we ſhall have a Building of God, *an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* And at laſt, *this Corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption, this Mortal, Immortality, and Death ſhall be ſwallowed up in Victory.* Then ſhall we, with all our godly Relatives; yea, with the univerſal Church, begin an everlaſting Triumph, ſaying, *O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death* was *Sin; and the Strength of Sin* was *the Law: But Thanks be to God who hath given us the Victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

[redacted]

THE ODE.

AT Length the Heroine's crown'd. Her num'rous Foes,
With whom ſhe long conflicted, are ſubdu'd:
Under her Feet they're laid, while ſhe, in Strains
Angelic, ſings the Praiſes of her Lord,
Thro' whom ſhe prov'd Victorious. She, bleſt Soul!
In the gay Morn of Life, which Millions waſte
In vain Amuſements, from the World retir'd;
Search'd out the Paths her Feet might ſafely tread;
Soon ſhe deſcry'd them, by the friendly Aid
Of Revelation, that unerring Guide
To Realms of endleſs Light, and Love, and Joy.
The pleaſing Views ſhe took of promis'd Aids,
From the Almighty God, when Fears aroſe,

Diſ-

Diſpell'd them all: So in the chearful Dawn
Of the returning Day, the Shades retire
Before the Sun's bright Beams, and Nature ſmiles.

The Journey well begun, daily were made
Some new Advances in the heavenly Road:
The dear, departed Saint preſs'd towards the Goal;
Nor Earth, and Hell combin'd, could ever ſhake
Her firm Reſolves. That cruel Fiend,
Who once, permitted by th' immortal King,
Plagu'd the great Eaſtern Hero, he reſolv'd
Again to try, if an uncommon Share
Of Pain, and Weakneſs, could depreſs a Mind
Already rais'd to Heav'n. 'Twas all in vain;
She who was long the Mark at which he ſhot
His poiſon'd Arrows, ſtill remain'd unhurt
Within: Tho' Life, alas! imbittered thus,
Became a heavy Burden! To the laſt,
She kept in View the never fading Crown,
Saw it prepar'd by Grace, to deck her Brows
Thro' endleſs Ages. Lo! She wears it now
Triumphant, in her Saviour's bliſsful Preſence.
No ſooner had ſhe reach'd the Land of Reſt,
Than the bright Hoſts of Heav'n rejoic'd; all hail'd
The new Inhabitant, they led her on
To her own Manſion, where adorn'd with Robes

Of

Of ſpotleſs Purity, ſhe now adores
God, and the Lamb, whoſe precious Blood, once ſhed,
Purchas'd her Seat above: She reaps the Fruits,
The glorious Fruits of all her Toil, and Pain.
The unimpriſon'd Soul, now full of Light,
Of ſacred Love, of undiſturbed Peace,
Of pure, ecſtatic Pleaſure, waits to ſee
The welcome Day approach, when Heaven, and Earth
Shall paſs away, when the great Trump ſhall ſound,
And call the Nations from their dark Abodes.
Then ſhall the once Majeſtic, lovely Form,
Now brought to Duſt, and ſtripp'd of all its Beauty,
Come forth to be array'd, by Power Divine,
Like to its glorious Lord. The happy Saint
Compleated thus, ſhall reign in Light unmix'd,
Nor fear leſt Age ſhould e'er deſtroy her Bliſs.

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